

THE GREAT OFFENSIVE

ALL the world is watching the strip of sea called the English Channel. Something may happen there, and soon, which will stand for ever among the great feats of the world's history. Whether the great offensive will begin there, across the broader waters of the North Sea, or along the Atlantic coasts, only a few men know.

This is the greatest secret of our time. In the closed lands of Europe and in Germany itself much would be given to know that secret. Many experts in the enemy lands watch the signs of preparation, study the forecasts, and listen eagerly to the broadcasts. If only they knew. There never has been such an "if." It surpasses all the conjectures of history, and all the guesses which men have ever made.

Secret Preparations

So great is the secret and so vast the things which depend on its keeping that the ordinary man is prepared to wait and wonder. He knows that all over Britain great armies of men are exercising and preparing; that upon the beaches and foreshores of our beloved island men are landing and embarking, trying out their weapons, and getting drenched in the winter seas. Great areas of our island have been evacuated so that in the secrecy of its commons, fields, and lanes a vast army may prepare itself. It is that army which will reveal the secret to the waiting world.

IN the hours of a day, or night, this year the seas round this island will be crowded with a mighty Armada which will move in giant array to the attack. The great secret will be out. Everyone then must be at his post—ready to spring to the great offensive.

There is an air of expectancy abroad. Men are on the watch. From the French coast the Germans turn their glasses toward the Dover cliffs. From those cliffs our watchers scan the shores of the Continent. No longer do they guard those cliffs expecting an invasion; they are now the invaders.

The hour is at hand, but the secret is, when and where. This uncertainty adds to the energy of preparation. The note of expectancy rings out. Where the blow will fall only a few men know; but on the beaches, the landing fields, in the yards and the slipways, in the creeks and harbours, the great preparations go forward.

The Long-Awaited Hour

This is the hour for which we have long waited. In the retreats and devastations we have never given up confidence that this time would arrive. We are coming near to the hour of the great offensive with calm resolve. All Europe is throbbing with rumours, and most of them are being circulated by the enemy in the hope that one rumour may pick up a fragment of truth in its train. Who knows? Who has the secret?

FOR the secrets of the great offensive are worth an empire. On their safe keeping depends the life of the free peoples. Upon a few men rests the planning and the organising of this immense attempt to give the world a new start. Upon many men rests a share in this task. Upon all men is laid the burden of being ready to play their part in this gigantic operation.

Never before has the task of invading Europe been undertaken in this manner.

The great forces of Islam in the 13th century were marauding bands, and the feats of our Plantagenet kings on the fields of France were summer afternoon jousts compared with this. Not even the great alliances which finally overthrew Napoleon can compare with the marshalled forces which are to assault Hitler's concrete fortress. Behind those mighty bastions, from the North Cape to Biarritz, our enemies are ready to resist every challenge by our invading hosts. The wresting of the bridgeheads will be a costly and sacrificial battle. New names will shine beside Dunkirk, Tobruk, Alamein, and Tunis on the banners of the world.

THIS is an offensive to win. There must be no failure now. Too much depends on the offensive for that to happen. The armies, the navies, and the air forces now strike to win. The hesitations and the doubts are over. The final sledge-hammer blows of the free peoples must be driven home to win. This is the hour of victory.

It is for the destruction of evil and hate that this offensive is necessary. The temporary empire which evil men have set up in Europe is doomed to destruction. But that doom can only be sealed by what happens on the beaches and landing grounds of the Continent. There the issues must be settled. Never were sand and shingle, foreshore and promenade, more significant in the life of the nations. From the North Cape to the Spanish frontier there are miles of pleasant coast which may see the most decisive battles in human history. On their shores the offensive which brings destruction to the Nazis will be launched.

Crusaders For Freedom

This is also an offensive of hope. How many cottagers and small farmers on the Continent daily strain their ears for the beginning of the offensive? The guns must speak to them of hope and deliverance. Across the fields of tortured Europe the armies of hope must march, opening the doors, liberating the captives, binding up the wounds, and comforting the brokenhearted. The great offensive is an attack on the Fortress of Darkness to release the spirit of freedom and happiness. Every soldier on the beach is a crusader who carries in his knapsack the keys of hope for the captives.

Unlike any other offensive in history this will prepare the way for a greater one. It clears the path for the columns of food lorries, ambulances, relief supplies, and medical stores now waiting to cross the seas. Not only tanks and weapons of warfare are to go beyond the bridgeheads, but also the lovely things which speak of friendship and understanding; and this is the last offensive which the delivered people will remember even when the stories of the landings grow old in the telling. The soldier becomes a saviour in this offensive; the sailor a succourer; and the flying man a friend in need.

THE great offensive is a leaders' offensive. The leaders are ready, the men are ready, and everyone has confidence and hope that it will be vigorous and successful. Upon the leaders depends the immense issue of the future of the world. Yet upon their followers in the front lines and no less in the home lines much also depends. Confidence, decision, valour, and enterprise by every one of us—all are now needed as never before.

CHILDREN'S NEWSPAPER

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FOUNDED BY ARTHUR MEE

A Fight in Fancy Dress

NOT long ago, when the cruiser HMS London was on patrol duty in the South Atlantic and about to cross the line of the Equator, the crew decided to observe the time-honoured ceremony of ducking the novices on board.

King Neptune was decked out in full regalia and his satellites wore the appropriate costumes, and the ritual was about to be carried out, when suddenly the ship's bugler sounded "Action stations." The crew immedi-

ately went into action in fancy dress.

An enemy ship had been sighted; she was challenged and tried to escape, but when within range one broadside from the guns of the cruiser, manned by her fancy-dress gunners, did such damage to the enemy blockade runner that she was quickly scuttled by her crew, and all was over.

Not long afterwards King Neptune and his court completed the interrupted ceremony.



Keeping the Wheels Turning

Michael Engert, a 15-year-old boy of Malvern College, spends his school holidays helping to repair LMS engines at the Watford depot.

THE OLD LUMBER ROOM

THE enthusiasm of young people for their church was illustrated recently with the dedication of a Chapel of Youth at Edge Lane Methodist Church, Droylsden, Manchester.

Six months ago this Chapel of Youth was no more than a lumber room, full of rubbish and discarded relics, all thick with dust. But a room was needed for the senior members of the Sunday school, and so some twenty-five eager young people set to work to convert the "junk-room."

After clearing away all the rubbish and thoroughly cleaning out the room, they re-decorated it; and all this work they did in their spare time, putting in an odd hour whenever possible. Now the chapel looks attractive in blue and cream, with a reded of blue tapestry. The whole place reflects the gratifying devotion of young people to their church.

To Win the War, and the Peace

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT, in a stern message to Congress, has advised measures for the conscription of all civilians for what he calls "the final effort—for the total defeat of our enemies."

It should be remembered that while the President of the United States possesses great power, he cannot himself initiate legislation. What he does is to advise Congress what he thinks ought to be done, then if his Message wins enough support in Congress a member, or members, will introduce a Bill embodying the desired legislation.

Mr Roosevelt now asks Congress to set up an economic "bill of rights," with downright provisions ranging from the citizen's rights to a good education to his rights to useful and remunerative work. This may perhaps indicate that he has made up his mind to stand for President for a fourth term, and to arm the executive with measures which Congress is expected to welcome as a courageous lead to the nation. These measures would check all hoping to make profits for themselves at the expense of their neighbours.

To concentrate all our energies, says the President, he recommends that Congress adopt taxes which will take all unreasonable profits and reduce the ultimate cost of the war; a continuation of the law which will prevent unfair prices for war goods; action to maintain the integrity of the American dollar; and a National Service Law which, for the duration, will prevent strikes and will make available for war production every able adult in the country, with certain exceptions.

In his message advising these measures, -this "win-the-war programme," Mr Roosevelt said: "This nation in the past two years has become an active partner in the world's greatest war against human slavery."

"We have joined with right-minded people in order to defend ourselves in a world that has been gravely threatened with gangster rule. But I do not think

that any of us Americans can be content with mere survival. The sacrifices that we and our allies are making impose upon us all a sacred obligation to see to it that out of this war we and our children will gain something better than mere survival.

"We are united in determination that this war shall not be followed by another interim which leads to new disaster—that we shall not repeat the tragic errors of ostrich isolationism, that we shall not repeat the excesses of the wild twenties when this nation went for a joy-ride on a roller coaster which ended in a tragic crash."

The President went on to remind Congress that the last war ended in a peace which was not a peace, largely because there had not been earlier opportunities for "man to man discussions which lead to meetings of minds." That was a mistake, he said, which we are not repeating in this war.

When, a few days after this brave and historic message, President Roosevelt sent Congress the next budget (asking for another 25,000 million pounds), he underlined this point.

"We are now engaged in discussion with other members of the United Nations to work out plans to expedite the international flow of capital into worth-while long-term investments, to remove obstacles to international trade, and to stabilise currencies. The United Nations are working towards a permanent international organisation for food and agriculture. We are also considering co-operative arrangements to facilitate maritime and air transport."

"Military success is not enough—the enemy beaten on the field of battle, may still arise in our midst if we fail in the task of reconstruction."

BACK TO CIVILIAN LIFE

THE Government have published the Bill to carry out their promise to give their jobs back to Service men and women at the close of the war.

This Bill applies to all men, volunteers or conscripts, who joined the armed forces after May 25, 1939, women similarly enrolled in the many wholtime services linked with the Forces, and fulltime members of Civil Defence who, after April 10, 1941, enrolled in consequence of a notice.

Broadly speaking, employers are expected to reinstate former

employees. Should they refuse without good cause they will become liable to fines up to £50 and to pay compensation. The majority will certainly get their civilian jobs back; others cannot be guaranteed reinstatement because businesses no longer exist.

While the old employer is the first judge of a case, Reinstatement Committees will be appointed to judge of fair or unfair treatment, and there could be appeal to a State Umpire.

There is no possibility at all of Parliament neglecting the Service men and women to whom we owe so much.

Millions More For Pensions

NEW Supplementary Pensions Regulations now coming into force will add £7,250,000 a year to the cost of pensions for a million and a half old age pensioners and widows.

Under the new scale a married couple having no other resources will receive 35s a week, plus rent allowance; a single pensioner living alone will have 20s, plus rent allowance; and a single pensioner living in someone else's house will have 17s 6d.

The rate of children's allowances is also increased, so that widows and children will benefit.

It is hard to realise, perhaps, that it was only in 1908 that Mr Asquith's Government first made the receipt of an old age pension of five shillings a week a right claimable by every person who was 70 years of age and who had a yearly income not exceeding £21. In the first year of that Act the number of pensioners was 692,740.

THE NEW ANTI-TANK BRIGADE

To sling a stone into a pond has always been one of youth's almost irresistible impulses; and even men past their youth have been known to spend much of their holiday time and energy making pebbles bounce on the sea.

Now it would appear that all this urge to throw things at water, and into water, has for some time been concentrated on the NFS emergency water tanks; and so widespread and so serious has the habit become that the Ministry of Home Security has launched a nationwide campaign to prevent what has become a sabotaging of our fire-fighting reserves of water.

Children, of course, have had their share in the mischief, but thoughtless grown-ups are also to blame, and some of the damage to tanks must be deliberate. The things salvaged from tanks are unbelievable.

The top of a hearse was found in one London tank, and a complete Anderson shelter in another; but perhaps Norwich leads the way in strange collections, for there from one tank alone was taken: a 10-cwt garden roller, a barrage balloon cable, two pig-food bins, a Bren gun with ammunition, and a perambulator!

Here are Litter Louts at work again on a really ambitious scale, and up and down the land they have become in effect an unheroic Anti-Tank Brigade, a dastard, cowardly band.

Some idea of the baneful results of their work is shown by the fact that clearing a single tank in Birkenhead meant the wasting of 232,000 gallons of water and many gallons of petrol used in pumping, as well as several days of work for 12 men.

This wanton waste of water, labour, money, and other things, must be stopped. And by being thoughtful and vigilant we can all help to stop it.

Dry England

There has been a lack of rain in the past few weeks, especially in the basin of the Thames, where last year the rainfall was 3.81 inches below the average. The Metropolitan Water Board has recently stated that its storage capacity is 14,900 million gallons (that is 50 days' supply) less than would have existed but for the war. It therefore appeals for even greater economies in the use of water than are now being practised.

The east and south-east of the country are England's dry area, and this recurring problem has raised a discussion of the possibility of equalising supplies by a National Water Grid, on the lines of the great grid which distributes national electricity.

It seems, however, that experts consider that costs would be prohibitive. The British Water Works Association say the cost of the four-inch-cast distribution pipes would be £700 a mile, to say nothing of the accompanying sewerage system.

We have yet to settle the location of new satellite towns, and the location of industry, and the water problem must in any case wait upon that planning.

Little News Reels

AN important conference on matters jointly affecting both Australia and New Zealand has been held at Canberra.

There were 169,348 births in the September quarter, the highest total since 1926; also the infantile mortality rate, 40 per 1000, was the lowest ever recorded.

When the President of Colombia signed the United Nations declaration at Washington the number of United Nations became 34.

ARGENTINA has had one of the worst earthquakes in its history, and over half of the buildings in the city of San Juan are said to be destroyed.

Mr Churchill, completing his convalescence at Marrakesh in Morocco had discussions there with General de Gaulle before making his surprise return to England.

Eight million citrus fruits were harvested in the Netherlands West Indies in 1943.

Sheffield ramblers are to have access to a further 8000 acres of lovely Derbyshire moorland—Ramsley Moor, Big Moor, and Totley Moss.

Yorkshire is to have 10 Government hostels for boys called up for mining; each hostel will house 500 boys.

The submarine *Scraph*, which secretly landed General Mark Clark on the Algerian coast before the Allied invasion, it has been revealed, also took General Giraud from French shores to a flying boat in the Mediterranean.

EVERY schoolchild in the four Kent parishes of Newington, Saltwood, Stanford, and Swingfield has been immunised against diphtheria.

At a Ministry of Food demonstration canning workers were shown how soup in a tin with a fuse down the middle became piping hot within four minutes of the fuse being lighted.

Over 1,600,000 people went to the London Zoo in 1943, the highest number since 1939.

A third of all the British naval flying men are being trained in the U.S.

The National Farmers' Union propose a ban next season on smoking by workers in the harvest fields and those engaged in threshing.

A 2½d stamp issued in 1882 at Turks Island in the Bahamas realised £175 at a London sale.

Lord Woolton and British Homes

LORD WOOLTON, speaking at Liverpool recently, referred to the building of new houses. We owe it, he said, that priority shall be given to the places that have suffered enemy action. He added that, without giving any pledge in the matter, he thought it right that some priority should be given to the returning soldiers, particularly the newly married, so that they might begin their married life in a home of their own.

Soon, Lord Woolton says, we shall be able to examine near London, and possibly elsewhere, models of the sort of house it is hoped to offer the British citizen in relief of the housing shortage. Plans have been carefully made, and a dozen designs have been worked out to show what can be done.

In a few weeks we shall be able to invite local authorities to look at the results of their re-

CASUALTIES of the American Forces since the outbreak of war are 139,858.

Grantham House, a fine old mansion at Grantham in Lincolnshire, has been presented to the National Trust.

Canada has enough wheat in her granaries to feed the whole world for over a month with half a loaf of bread every day.

General Smuts has been given a set of chessmen representing Polish soldiers and statesmen famous in Poland's history.

Since the war there have been 10,000 air raid incidents on British railways.

Britain is buying the entire Ceylon tea crop for 1944.

AN American sheepdog, Chips, awarded the DSC for courage in Sicily, is the first dog so decorated.

The British War Relief Society of America has given three mobile canteens to dock areas in Britain.

Pontefract Town Council has instituted a custom of opening its proceedings with a prayer.

It is proposed to set up a memorial at Dartmouth to Thomas Newcomen, who in 1710 invented a steam-engine for pumping water out of mines.

It is hoped that during this year school meals will be provided for three out of every four children.

Sussex beekeepers in 1943 sent more than 13 cuts of honey to submarine crews.

Youth News Reel

A PROVISIONAL Dutch Scout Association has been formed in Britain under the leadership of the Dutch Scouts Royal Commissioner, Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands.

Over 2300 magazines and periodicals for the Forces have been collected by the 1st Goodwood (Australia) Scout Group as the result of constant door-to-door collections.

Providing entertainment for over 150 children is the latest good turn of the 1st Seaton Delaval (Northumberland) Scout Group. Following a large tea the children enjoyed many Scout games.

Over £478, raised by the efforts of the 1st Glanllyn (Welfare) Scout Troop during the past 16 months, has been divided between various charities.

searches in practical form. They are intended mainly to show what can be done with the new materials produced by research in the last two years. These new model houses are not merely experimental; they include types which have already been put to proof, but that are not well known. It is not a matter of exhibiting household gadgets, but of showing how best to build of sound materials quickly put together.

A Cure For Sore Throats

The discovery of a new remedy for curing the ordinary sore throat in 12 to 14 hours has been claimed by a London throat and ear specialist. One injection of Thiobismol, a bismuth salt, into a muscle during the first day of an attack of sore throat will curtail the complaint, and a second injection is rarely needed.

The Spirit of Burns

WHEN the Chinese Goodwill Mission toured the West of Scotland recently, one of its members, Dr Wen Yuan-ning, surprised his guides with his knowledge of the works of Robert Burns; frequently during the tour he quoted some lines from Scotland's national poet suitable to the occasion.

Dr Yuan-ning, who has been for many years a student and fervent admirer of Scottish literature, was specially thrilled when the party visited the Burns country. At Alloway they saw the humble cottage in which the poet was born, and

the monument erected in his memory, and they followed the road along which Tam o' Shanter made his famous midnight ride.

As they wandered through the picturesque Gardens of Doon, they were enchanted by their similarity to the gardens of their native land, and for a brief space they felt themselves back home.

We feel sure that these charming representatives of our Ally will return to China with pleasant memories of Scotland, and more convinced than ever that the ties uniting our two nations are too strong ever to be broken.

A NEW WAY

For long years it has been the custom at Wester Auchengeich Colliery in Lanarkshire for the men to spend what is called an idle day whenever one of their fellow-workers is killed in the pit.

Now the miners have decided among themselves to go on working whatever happens, and to contribute half-a-crown towards helping the relatives of any miner killed at his work.

NEED FOR DECISION

After conferring together, the Royal Society of British Architects, the National House Builders' Registration Council, and the Building Societies Association, have issued a joint report begging the Government to push forward all their plans. This they say, is essential to enable government departments and the actual builders to make everything ready for beginning the construction of the 4 million houses immediately the war closes and for their completion within 10 or 12 years.

No one concerned should be kept longer in doubt as to how to plan the enormous amount of work that must be contemplated; if necessary all government machinery should be overhauled to make sure that no time is wasted.

The Report recommends the use of "pre-fabrication" to cut down building time, but holds that no pre-fabrication system should be licenced which does not conform with scientific tests.

HAPPY ENDING

Just before last Christmas an eighteen-year-old seaman, Norris Thornton, lay in hospital at Ellis Island, New York, suffering from loss of memory. He has now returned home completely cured.

It may be recalled that his memory was restored by hearing his young sister Sylvia broadcast from a BBC studio his favourite song, I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas. The song his sister sang has been followed by a joyous reunion.

He Saved the Flowers in the Blitz

MR DUNCAN CAMPBELL, made an MBE in the New Year Honours List, is Superintendent of Hyde Park, and responsible also for Green Park, St James's Park, and the Victoria Tower Gardens. This 60-year-old Scot has deserved well of his king and his fellow-citizens, for despite the heavy call-up of his staff of gardeners and keepers, and the unpleasant attentions of the Luftwaffe, he has kept many of London's parks and gardens bright and beautiful.

One particularly clever achievement of his was the salvage of

geranium plants from large stocks which suffered in the heavy raids of 1940 and 1941. He could not save many in that sad holocaust, but he had made plans for beautifying the Victoria Monument gardens which lie was determined to carry out; and so clever was his rearrangement of the slender stocks, that nobody noticed any shortage of geraniums later on, though there was less than one-third of the normal quantity in the charming flower beds which so enhance the approaches to Buckingham Palace.

HARVESTING CARROTS

In days like these, when time is a vital factor, it is good news that a Yorkshire farmer has found a way of gathering a crop of carrots in half the usual time.

He is Mr H. Thirsk of Pocklington, and he has devised a farm implement, driven by a small tractor, which has a circular saw. This passes over the carrots as they stand in the field, slices off the tops, and leaves them ready for another implement to dig them up and throw them into a line. In this way one and a half acres can be harvested by six land girls in one day.

The War-Horse Once Again

THOUGH the war-horse has largely given way to the tank, the animal which decided many a historic battle is still paramount in the snow, the mountains, and the jungle.

Cossacks, the most renowned horsemen in the world, have charged once more as the advanced scouts of the Red Army across the windswept plains of Russia. Mounted Cossacks were the first regulars to reach the Dnieper in Russia's great counter offensive, and no doubt they will be the first across the borders of Germany.

In the mountains of Italy,

inaccessible to tanks, men of the Fifth Army have pursued the retreating Germans on horseback; in France and the Balkans horses have ably assisted the guerrillas in harassing the invader; and Australians fighting the Japs in the steaming jungles of New Guinea have used the horse in conditions which even defeated the ubiquitous jeep.

The horse which charged with the Light Brigade at Balaclava, and followed the banner of the Australian Imperial Light Horse through the deserts of Palestine and Syria, has answered yet again the bugle's stirring call.

PROTECTING THE PETREL

Cabbage Tree Island, the only known nesting-place in Australia of the white-winged petrel, is no longer to be used as an artillery target.

The Australian Minister for the Army, Mr Forde, has notified the Royal Zoological Society that he has issued instructions to this effect. When it was recently reported that the island was being used for gunnery practice the secretary of the Zoological Society pointed out that this might lead to the extermination of these rare birds. The island is a sanctuary for fauna and flora under State laws.

BREAD AND POTATOES

Housewives of late have been complaining that potatoes go "black" in boiling, and that bread is becoming darker; but authorities hasten to reassure them.

Word comes from the Long Ashton Research Station, Bristol, that the discoloration of boiled potatoes is caused by a harmless excess of iron when potatoes are grown in certain types of soil which have not been under cultivation before. Though they may not look so appetising, the potatoes are perfectly wholesome.

As for bread, the Ministry of Food declares that the national loaf merely varies slightly in colour from time to time in different areas and there is no need to fear that we are destined to have "black" bread. The quality is being steadily maintained, and the ingredients still consist of 85 per cent national flour, with the remainder made up of oats, barley, and a small proportion of rye.

CHURCH AND STATION

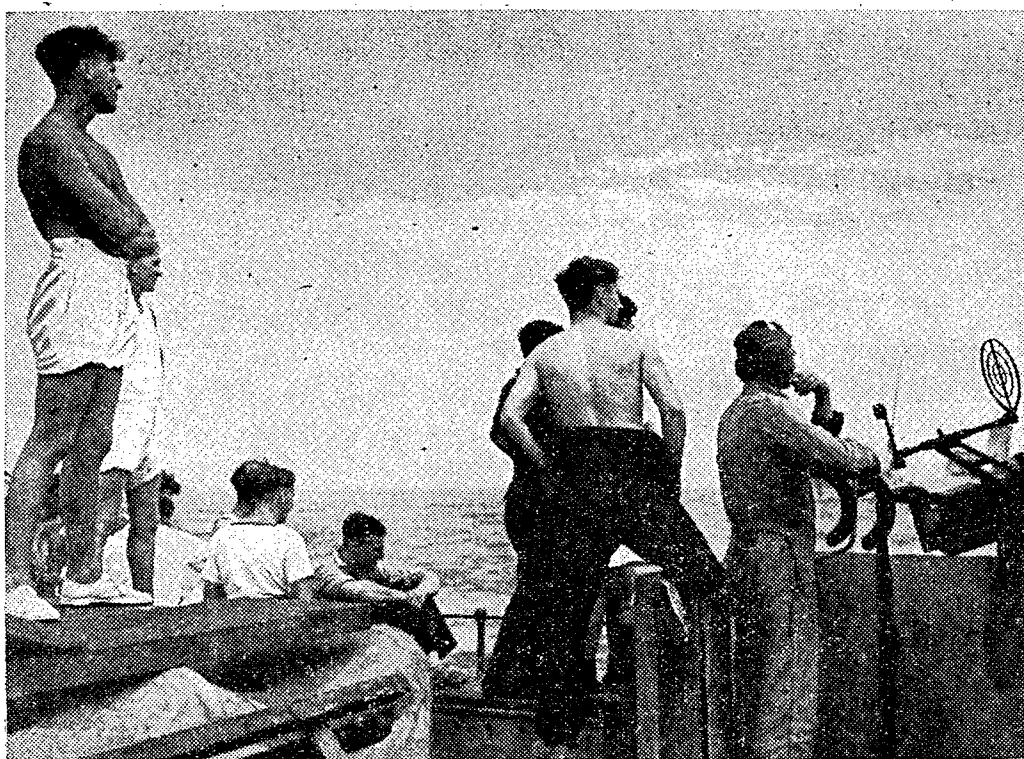
As LMS war freight trains go rumbling by, the villagers of Troutbeck, in the heart of the John Peel country, go to church in the station waiting-room, the parish church of Mungrisdale, Cumberland, being 3½ miles away.

The vicar cycles over every Sunday to conduct the service.

Much Ado About a Kettle

MR HUGH DALTON, President of the Board of Trade, has smoothed out yet another trouble, this time in the north of Scotland. Kettles have reached Aberdeenshire firesides, and there is contentment again beside these Highland hobs.

Aberdeenshire folk are patient, but, like all Scots, they do not enjoy the thought that they are having a bad deal from the "Southron." Some months ago there was a grave shortage of kettles in this large county.



Watching the Battle

Cruiser men of the Royal Navy on Atlantic convoy duty watching destroyers as they drop depth charges on U-boats retreating after an unsuccessful attack on the convoy.

NEW ZEALAND TROOP

The gift of a New Zealand ensign has been made by proxy to the 1st Kingstanding Senior Scouts, Birmingham, by the 1st St Aidan's Troop in Auckland, New Zealand. The gift has been made in response to an expressed desire by the English scouts to become the NZ Troop.

The troop was not permitted to change its name unless a flag was presented to it from a kindred troop in the Dominion. Delivery of the gift has come through the High Commissioner for New Zealand in London and Scout Headquarters.

Lady Cobbler

Mr Tom Richards has been crippled by rheumatism for the past two months, and so jolly Mrs Rose Richards is mending all the boots and shoes in her part of Bayswater.

Rosie, as they call her, has been helping to mend the footwear of the district since the beginning of the war. She taught herself because she felt her husband needed help. Now she is quite single-handed, except for about an hour in the evening, when Tom comes downstairs and does what he can to help.

Rosie works hard, and works well, but what the customers like also about Rosie is that sunny smile of hers. No matter how dull the day, how irritating the troubles with leather and other materials, how exacting the customers, Rosie always has a smile for them all. Nothing upsets her. As she says, what upsets you if you are happy and busy?

AUSTRALIAN LOSSES

The Australian Army has suffered nearly 56,000 casualties, says Mr Forde, the Minister for the Army. The totals since the beginning of the war are:

Killed in action and died of wounds or other causes, 10,884; wounded, 15,332; missing, 3,784; prisoners of war, 25,895.

The EDITOR'S TABLE

The Meat Problem

A VERY important statement has been made by our new Minister of Food, Colonel Llewellyn. Not only is there a world shortage in the meat supply, but, he says, we shall have to rely largely upon fish to supplement the meat ration.

This statement has, we fear, been received with some dismay by the housewife who knows only too well how difficult it has been to buy fish at all. Colonel Llewellyn says that we must and can do more about fish, but his Ministry has to bear a tremendous strain on the food position and he does not want to make any promises. The release of frozen fillets of fish was insufficient to make up the recent loss in the landing of fresh supplies of white fish.

Further statements of the Ministry will be eagerly looked for, but, however small may be our future meat ration, we shall not grumble, for it will bring nearer the days of peace and eventual plenty.

Retail Shops After the War

THOUSANDS of people are wondering what is to become of retail shops after the war. It can be said at once that there is no intention of continuing the licensing of retail shops indefinitely or beyond the transitional period from war to peace.

Control must not go suddenly, however, for there are registered with the Board of Trade 13,000 shopkeepers who have had to give up business because of the war. They will be given the first opportunity to return to shopkeeping if they desire to do so. There are, too, many disabled persons reported by the Ministry of Labour as desiring to open shops; these also will be given priority as new shopkeepers.

Everybody agrees that this is a matter which must be administered with the utmost fairness to all concerned.

Under the Editor's Table

ONE of the cleverest entertainers in the Army used to be a plumber. Should know how to do tap dancing.

THREE thousand Londoners are on the waiting list for allotments. So nobody can read it.

SOME quite dull people pass for clever. But they pass quickly.

THE modern girl likes hard facts. Perhaps that accounts for some of the home-made pastry.

Peter Puck Wants to Know



If light sleepers can sleep in the dark

A GOLDEN RULE

IN the course of his farewell speech to the Eighth Army General Montgomery said:

"Since commanding this Army I have never once issued a written order to my subordinate generals about operations. The text I have always had in my mind from the New Testament is: *Except ye utter by the tongue words easy to understand, how shall it be known what is spoken?*"

The General's example is one to be followed, for to speak simply and clearly is to be easily understood. It should be a Golden Rule for all of us.

Teaching Father to Cook

SALISBURY Education Committee is opening cookery classes for men only, said to be the first of their kind in the country.

Presumably the idea of "men only" is to spare the blushes of the would-be cooks as they tackle their unusual tasks; but certainly the appeal for students seems to be successful, for those enrolled for the course of twelve weekly lessons include engineers, scientists, a canon, a bank manager, a catering business manager, a surgeon, and last but not least the chairman of the Education Committee, Councillor R. G. Gordon. We are told that the students will be allowed to take home specimens of their work for the edification of their womenfolk.

Will the men put their best efforts into these specimens? That is the question. For if Father's cooking is voted by the family to be better than Mother's much "homework" is foreseen for Salisbury's new students!

YOUR and MY

WE are told that in 1943 twenty-five million more people booked at LMS stations than in 1942.

There are still many people, we fear, who read the familiar slogan just as it is printed. It should be read, of course, *Is my journey really necessary?*

THE MAN IN THE TRAIN

By a Fellow Passenger

THE railway carriage was full, but the little old gentleman in the corner so angled himself as to secure ample elbow room.

Though almost toothless he puffed stoutly at a pipe held resolutely in his mouth. In his hand was a newspaper, and with gleaming satisfaction he was at work on it with a pencil. He seemed to be touching up and elaborating what might be a map of the Front, and a very blissful old gentleman he looked.

But a change came. The pencil halted. Benevolence of features yielded to a look of anger as he regarded his paper. The hand still paused; wrath mounted and glowed more and more fiercely in his face. Suddenly, as the train stopped, he clutched his paper as if wringing its neck, then rose and left the carriage, uttering a ferocious, explosive "Pah!" as he went.

"I know what beat him," said one of the remaining passengers. "It was that sixth one. He couldn't get beyond the fifth in his cross-word puzzle. His family won't half catch it when he gets home!"

Trade and Duty

MR ERNEST BEVIN, the Minister of Labour and National Service, addressed some very plain words to industry in opening at Manchester a Cotton Board Exhibition of textiles for domestic and hotel use.

He spoke of the importance of earning the confidence of women after the war. The industry must do its duty by the public; control would be a question of common sense; there would have to be a fair allocation of raw materials, and there must be no outpouring of rubbish or hunt for hasty profit-making. The soldiers, the airmen, and the seamen have played straight, and they are entitled to ask that those who manufacture goods for the home should play straight in return.

The nation must prevent the manufacture of rubbishy goods, which are as bad for the home market as for the overseas market; it must seek to uphold the prestige of British goods.

The slogan Made in Britain has long stood in the world's markets as a guarantee of good quality, and wise industrialists will see that that standard is upheld. Should there be any manufacturers of the other kind it is good to learn that the Government will have the remedy.

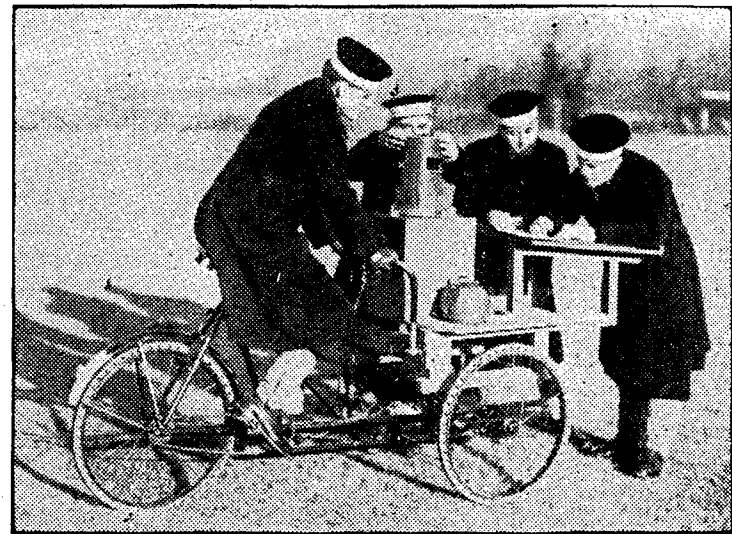
Social Welfare

BLACKPOOL has decided to change the name of the Public Assistance Committee to Social Welfare Committee.

A much happier-sounding title, we think.

JUST AN IDEA

As *Thoreau* wrote, *Goodness is the only investment that never fails.*



The Good Ship "Stop Me"

What has happened to the familiar ice-cream tricycles, with their slogan Stop Me and Buy One, which swarmed our countryside in happier days? The answer is given in part by this picture, which shows one of them converted for use by naval officer cadets when taking their navigation course.

British Shorthorns Make History

SHORTHORN dairy cattle made history in Britain during the memorable year 1943. Immense prices, more than three times higher than those of 1939, were reached at the big sales, where 1704 beasts fetched £199,000.

This is an average of £116 for each animal, compared with the 1939 average of £36 for 1138 head of cattle. Prices have gone up steeply for all necessities during this war, as they did in the last. And no necessity could be more vital than first-rate cattle, especially if the end of this war is to witness a great revitalising of British agriculture.

Are present prices too high? It is difficult to tell. But the new interest being taken in farming as an investment suggests that what is called "big business" has plans to put our agriculture on a new basis. We hope it will be remembered that the farmer and the farm-worker live on and by the land they till, and that no nation which does not build up a happy, contented, and prosperous body of agriculturists can hope to survive.

Perhaps the high prices given for British shorthorns are an indication of more extensive future breeding from our pedigree stock for the improvement of cattle abroad. British pedigree livestock has already done much for the cattle-ranches of the Argentine and Uruguay; and the

USSR would hardly have been prepared to send so many expert purchasers to our shows in the years before this war if they did not intend to breed widely from the finest British strains.

The British shorthorn has been called "the cosmopolitan shorthorn" because of the remarkable way in which it brings untold benefit to herds in all parts of Europe, America, and Australasia. With a home in almost every British county, its first "cradle" was in Durham, and many people still speak of our shorthorns as the Durham breed.

The first famous shorthorn cattle came from the valley of the Tees, and were known as Teeswater cattle early in the last century. Two brothers, Charles and Walter Colling, were the pioneers in the improvement of the breed, and before 1810, when the first great public show of shorthorns was held, they had sold cows and bulls for over £100 each. In that year there was a great sale at Ketton, near Stamford, when 29 of the Collings' cows and heifers averaged over £140 each, and 18 bulls fetched £169 8s each, while one magnificent bull, the celebrated Comet, reached the unbelievable price of a thousand guineas.

A few weeks ago a Dairy Shorthorn bull was sold for three thousand guineas!

A MID-ATLANTIC AIR BASE

THE Air Age has brought new importance to a number of islands, large and small, near and remote. A remarkable case is that of Ascension, a British island in the South Atlantic, which has been part of the British Empire since 1815. Situated 700 miles north-west of St Helena, the island made famous by its use as a prison for Napoleon, Ascension has an area of only 34 square miles.

It is of volcanic origin and has a number of volcanic cones, one of which rises to 2820 feet. In the present war the Admiralty has used it as a fuelling station and supply depot. In 1942 it be-

came necessary to transfer thousands of aircraft from the United States to Africa, and so a battalion of American engineers was sent to Ascension to prepare an aerodrome. This was done by blasting the rock, and so was provided an intermediate landing-stage for planes being flown to West Africa for the Middle East. After leaving Ascension the planes fly to Liberia, where landing grounds were also prepared.

Ascension has no harbours and all sea-borne supplies must be landed by lighter through surf which is usually rough in this mid-Atlantic solitude.

JUBILEE OF A GREAT ACHIEVEMENT

WERE we not at war we should all be acclaiming this month the jubilee of one of the greatest victories of peace. It was in January 1894 that the wonderful Manchester Ship Canal was opened, linking the capital of the world's cotton industry with the sea. It made Manchester a great inland seaport.

The Ship Canal was not the city's first experience of inland waterways. During the 18th century James Brindley, an unlettered genius, built a canal to carry coal from Worsley to Manchester, then merely a town of 20,000 population. Success prompted the canal's extension to Runcorn, 15 miles from Liverpool, but throughout its narrow, winding course it carried only horse-drawn barges. Manchester needed a direct and capacious channel, not only for up-to-date traffic requirements, but in order to avoid the excessive dues then charged by the Port authorities at Liverpool.

So in 1882 Daniel Adamson, a Manchester ironmaster, called a meeting of influential men and proposed a ship canal. Application for authority to construct this was made to Parliament, where grim opposition was encountered from the Liverpool dock owners, from railways, and other selfishly interested parties, all declaring the project impracticable and doomed to failure.

Three years were spent in overcoming this opposition, and the hesitancy of Parliamentary Committees. In one session a Committee of the House of Lords asked 25,367 questions of 154 witnesses, whose replies filled 1861 printed pages. Eventually the pertinacity of the dauntless promoters was rewarded, and in July 1885 permission was granted for the making of a canal for ships, which, entering at sea level in the Mersey estuary, were to load and unload at Manchester, at a level some 60 feet higher. The costs of promoting and contesting the Bill amounted to close on £400,000 and there remained the task of raising capital for the actual undertaking.

A Canal Over a Canal

Two years elapsed before the initial £8,000,000 were obtained, and, this proving insufficient, the Manchester City Council came valiantly to the rescue with loans amounting in all to five million pounds. Altogether the canal originally cost over £15,000,000.

As a feat of engineering the canal was a masterpiece of achievement. At the seaward end

the obstructive river Gowy had to be conducted under the canal in two siphon pipes, each 12 feet in diameter and 400 feet long. Five railways had to be carried over the waterway, as had many high-ways and footbridges. The most astonishing feat of all was the carrying of canal over canal. At Barton, Brindley's Bridgewater Canal is made to enter an aqueduct, a great steel trough suspended on a mighty central pier. In crossing the barge floats in water six feet deep; but to allow free passage to ships on the canal below the aqueduct swivels on its central pier, when the water is held in both aqueduct and canal by watertight doors.

A Lost River Found

Many dragons beset the engineers of the Ship Canal. Embankments, in places 40 feet high, were impelled by movements of squeezed clay; a series of washouts were occasioned by water soaking unexpectedly through sandstone hidden under clay; a lost river, buried by accumulated mud, came to light; and there were great floodings along parts of the canal. Nevertheless, in December 1893 the canal, 35½ miles long, 28 feet deep, and 120 feet wide, was completed for the triumphant opening during the January following.

The maximum number of workmen employed was 17,000. They excavated 54 million cubic yards of material, of which sandstone rock represented 12 million. The "spoil" served to fill hollows, so banishing floods and providing ideal building sites. Today, entering the canal at sea level, ships from the remotest seas bring their treasure up to Manchester by a series of locks.

At the Manchester terminus docks covering over 200 acres, with buildings of unexcelled efficiency, crown the canal. Ships up to 15,000 tons are served directly by quayside railways. There is peacetime accommodation for colossal stores of meat, fruit, and petrol, and King Cotton has here his port of entry and departure. Enormous gain to national wealth followed the coming of the canal, which has justified every hope, and falsified every prophecy of ill.

Taking a Bomb to Bed

THE history of aerial fighting is repeating itself, with a difference. Today our men of the bombers and the Spitfires are unexcelled; so were their predecessors in the previous war. The difference is that, whereas we began the present conflict with all too few planes, those planes were of splendid quality, but the heroes of 1914-18 had planes that were both few and ludicrously faulty, for the Air Age was then very young.

We ended the war supreme in the air, as we are today, but the beginnings read nowadays like a comic story that might accompany a series of Heath Robinson drawings.

The fighting airman of 1914 would challenge his enemy with

a revolver, a shotgun, a sporting rifle adapted to the firing of incendiary bullets, buckshot, and even chain shot. When the Royal Naval Air Service was being built up, Admiral Bacon, then in charge of the Dover Patrol, watched this branch of it through its infancy, and saw it develop from a mere scouting service into an active fighting arm.

The first bombs, he tells us in his book, were of from 10 to 20 pounds. These, however, were so scarce that keen pilots generally took their allowance of bombs to bed with them the night preceding a raid, lest other keen competitors should steal them for a raid during darkness!

CARRY ON

TIME PRESSES ON

REMOVED Time! Fierce spirit of the glass and scythe! What power Can stay him in his silent course, or melt His iron heart to pity? On, still on, He presses, and forever. The proud bird, The condor of the Andes, that can soar Through heaven's unfathomable depths, or brave The fury of the northern hurricane, And bathe his plumage in the thunder's home, Furls his broad wings at night-fall, and sinks down To rest upon his mountain crag: but Time Knows not the weight of sleep or weariness, And night's deep darkness has no chain to bind His rushing pinions.

George D. Prentice

The English Love of Home

INTO our very tissue has come this love of home, and it is not an accident that it belongs especially to the race that has carried freedom and good government throughout the world. It is not an accident that the English race, controlling the lives of hundreds of races throughout the world, is the most home-loving race of mankind. It is not a chance that the men who have gone out from English hearths have conquered barbarism. Something there is, in the love of home which binds men to the world we all inhabit, and stirs them on to make it home for all.

Arthur Mee

The Friendless Man

THAT man is not to be trusted who loves voluntary falsehood, and he who loves involuntary falsehood is a fool. Neither condition is enviable; for the untrustworthy or the ignorant man has no friend, and as time goes on his character becomes known.

Plato

THE SECRET STAIR

My house is full of noise and fret, The sound of many feet; There's work to do all through the day: There's bustle in the street.

But I who live within possess A secret, private stair Which brings me to an upper room

The name of which is Prayer;

And there, all quiet and alone, Above the din below, I meet and talk with God awhile And feel my spirit grow.

H. L. Gee

A Prayer of Thomas Aquinas

GOD of all goodness, grant us to desire ardently, to seek wisely, to know surely, and to accomplish perfectly, Thy holy Will, for the glory of Thy Name.

A Reason For Imperfections

ONE argument, used to the disadvantage of Providence, I take to be a very strong one in its defence. It is objected, that storms and tempests, unfruitful seasons, serpents, spiders, flies, and other noxious or troublesome animals, with many other instances of the same kind, discover an imperfection in nature, because human life would be much easier without them; but the design of Providence may clearly be perceived in this proceeding. The motions of the sun and moon, in short, the whole system of the universe, as far as philosophers have been able to discover and observe, are in the utmost degree of regularity and perfection; but, wherever God has left to man the power of interposing a remedy by thought or labour, there He has placed things in a state of imperfection on purpose to stir up human industry, without which life would stagnate, or indeed rather could not subsist at all.

Jonathan Swift

THERE IS ETERNITY FOR MAN

WHY, brooklet, dost thou chafe with rocks that stay Thy winding course for one brief moment's space! There is a sea when thou dost end thy way In whose wide bosom thou wilt find thy place: What is thy petty fuming to the sea, To billows of a shoreless ocean's sway; And what our cares, our hopes, our fears, our glee, Compared with blessedness that lasts for aye! We know there is eternity for man When his free soul outsoars this changeable clime, Having fulfilled his fretful, hasty span Of sojourning along this vale of time. The eternal, boundless ages joy shall give, As surely as our Father, God, doth live.

T. Pittaway

Arts of a Like Nature

POETRY and picture are arts of a like nature, and both are busy about imitation. It was excellently said by Plutarch, poetry was a speaking picture, and picture a mute poesy. For they both invent, feign, and devise many things, and accommodate all they invent to the use and service of Nature. Yet of the two the pen is more noble than the pencil; for that can speak to the understanding; the other but to the sense. They both behold pleasure and profit as their common object; but should abstain from all base pleasures, lest they should err from their end, and, while they seek to better men's minds, destroy their manners. They both are born artificers, not made. Nature is more powerful in them than study. Ben Jonson

THE INSPIRATION OF BOOKS

WHEN from the present strife and toil I look To see the triumphs of a by-gone day, I take for company some well-loved book And find a light to help me on my way. Thus, while without the howling tempests rage, And thick, gross darkness broods the whole world o'er, I glimpse a glory from the printed page

And, finding inspiration, seek for more. Surrounded by the wisdom of the years, I courage take, I strength and hope receive; God's Holy Book dispels my gloom and fears, Imparts to me the truth I must believe. The greatest book the world will ever see May be possessed today by you and me.

David Effaye



THIS ENGLAND

One sunny winter's day in Winster Valley, Westmorland

Heroism in Crete

The C N is ever loth to print accounts of war's horrors, but it takes the following from a New York Greek newspaper because it is a magnificent story of heroism in gallant little Greece. It is told by a Greek Bishop who has escaped from Crete to the Middle East.

THE priests are carrying on the struggle in cruelly tortured Crete, on the free mountain tops with our heroic insurgents. Only when this dreadful calamity has passed, and the world is at peace again, will be made manifest the inestimable contribution which the Church has made to the struggle our Allies are carrying on against the barbarians from Germany.

In much-tormented Crete whole hecatombs of priests and monks have been sacrificed by the barbaric conquerors. And the same thing is happening all over Greece. The Metropolitan of Klassona, Kallinicos, was taken with all sorts of humiliations to the concentration camp for hostages at Larissa. The very aged Metropolitan of Crete, Basil, was himself condemned to death, but was reprieved. He was, however, exiled from Crete and has been ill in a hospital for the last two years.

Somewhere in camp, as military chaplain to a Greek battalion, is Nikolis Neonakis. A short time ago he came from Crete, his martyred native land. I think he ought to be called to give his own testimony as to what the Germans did. They killed his whole family. They shot his aged father, after cruelly torturing him. When they had succeeded in seizing the priest himself, they threw him into a

tiny prison, about a metre high. They kept him crouched in there for 28 days, without food, water, covering, or a seat, not allowing him to go out from this dreadful cage even for necessary purposes. (All the time he lived on a piece of soap which he happened to have with him.) He cannot get over it even today.

Again, in martyred Crete, just when the Archimandrite Photios Theosakis, the head priest at the Cathedral in Herakleion, had put on his vestments, and was burying a young soldier whom the Germans had shot that day, a detachment of Germans burst into the church and seized him. They pulled off his sacred vestments, his cassock, and even his underclothing, leaving him quite naked and dragged him out of the church. With him they dragged four old Cretans, laymen, whom they had also stripped naked. For three days the Germans marched them naked through the streets, beating them incessantly. Then they took them to the place where they were to die, made them open the pits and then shot them. During all this the Archimandrite Photios confronted them with contempt, saying: "If you kill me there will be one Greek the less. But Greece has thousands of young men who will free her from your barbarity."

A CONRAD STORY

IN his new volume, *Other Things Than War*, Sir John Hammerton writes in his urbane manner, drawing upon his wide knowledge of Fleet Street. He pays tribute to his friends and colleagues, one of the closest of whom was Arthur Mee.

He has also many interesting things to tell us about the manuscripts of well-known authors. Reminding us that £630 was paid at a London sale for a one-page letter by Robert Burns, Sir John comments that as little as £20 might have saved the poet's life in his last illness and prolonged his years.

Sir John tells a good story about Conrad, who once wrote a special article for him. The typescript was returned by the author with some 40 corrections in ink and Conrad's initials. "I suggested to my secretary that if she cared to re-copy these sheets of typing she could have the manuscript and send it to New York, where some fond collector might pay her a substantial sum for it. This she did and pocketed about £25, the purchaser being the editor of one of the leading American periodicals.

"Later, however, I discovered that the form of the typescript as it reached me was its third condition! There existed a complete manuscript of the article in Conrad's handwriting, which had already found a purchaser in America round about a hundred pounds. Then there was the first draft in typescript with a considerable number of corrections, which had followed the original manuscript to New York and had been sold for about £50."

Sculptured Centenarian

One of our London statues attains this month a distinction similar to that ascribed to Shakespeare by Dr Johnson.

Noting that the poet had "out-lived the century," the term commonly fixed as the test of literary merit, he said that Shakespeare could assume the character of an ancient.

Chantrey's equestrian statue of George the Fourth, having now attained its century, according to the Doctor's ruling, may also be called "an ancient."

Standing at the north-east corner of Trafalgar Square, and remarkable for the absence of stirrups, it has a little-known story to explain its presence. Intended to preside over a palace, it rests instead in the shade of an admiral. The world-famous Marble Arch, erected in 1828, stood as the main entrance to Buckingham Palace, and in 1829 George the Fourth commissioned Sir Francis Chantrey for a fee of 9000 guineas to represent him seated on horseback, intending the statue to crown the arch.

Arch and statue never came together. The plan was abandoned. The king rode on his charger to Trafalgar Square, and the arch was eventually removed to a corner of Hyde Park. The king paid his sculptor only a third of the sum promised, and Chantrey had been dead two years when, in 1843, the balance was handed by the Treasury to his executors. The statue was unveiled a year later, and so is our newest "ancient."



Old Favourites

Punch and Judy were the cause of the rapt attention of these little folk. The children of prisoners of war, they were the guests of South African friends at a party given in London.

THE WARRIOR PARSON

WHEN, on January 30, three hundred years ago, William Chillingworth died a prisoner of war, those about him regarded him only as a divine who had set the heather blazing by a theological book. To modern thought he is no less interesting as one who worked out a scheme of war which he believed would be as revolutionary in his day as the Tank has been in ours.

A son of Oxford, at whose university he gained high honours, and a friend of wits, scholars, and leaders of religious thought, Chillingworth was unexpectedly converted to Roman Catholicism. Invited to the French University at Douay, to write an account of his change of religion, he thought again and returned to England a convinced Protestant once more. Throwing himself into disputes current between the two Churches, he wrote his famous book, *The Religion of Protestants a Safe Way to Salvation*.

In this he denied the right of any Church to impose creeds or teaching on its followers, asserting that the Bible alone is the

true guide. This was a doctrine resented by Puritans and Roman Catholics alike. Chillingworth eventually accepted office in the Anglican Church and, when the Revolution came, he marched with the Royalist army.

During the siege of Gloucester he remembered his classical learning, and invented modifications of Greek and Roman implements of war, among other things a modern version of the Roman tortoise, a device under whose shelter infantry could safely approach defensive walls to mine them.

Before his scheme could be put to the test a Parliamentary army arrived and raised the siege. Later he was one of the Royalists taken prisoner after retiring into Arundel Castle. Removed, an ailing captive, to Chichester, he died there, and in the Cathedral he lies.

His book was many times reprinted during the next century, and is still read by theological scholars. One phrase from it is still commonly quoted, "The Bible, I say, the Bible only, is the religion of the Protestant."

The VC Comes Home

To the people in Baillieston, in Lanarkshire, there recently came great news: Acting Flight-Lieut Reid, a native of their town, had been awarded the Victoria Cross for valour during a raid on Dortmund.

There and then they decided to give some concrete token of their esteem for the man who had added such distinction to the name of Baillieston, and they subscribed a total of £850. This sum was handed to the airman when he arrived home, unexpectedly the other day.

But that was not the only gift Flight-Lieut Reid received from folk both great and small. From his old school at Coatbridge, for example, he received a cake baked by the pupils. And, best of all, Baillieston's VC is to be the first to receive the MacRobert Reply Award, which Lady MacRobert gives "in recognition of deeds of gallantry and superb leadership by Scottish youth."

Amidst all this publicity the hero sagely observed: "I'll have to watch that all this fuss does not turn my head."

America Learns From Our Bowmen

It is not generally known that archery forms part of the training of light anti-aircraft gunners in the U.S.A. But it is not at all surprising, for what the crew of a light AA gun need is a keen eye and a swift touch, and these are just the qualities which made a good bowman in the days before guns.

Of all archers, the English were the most famous, and today two English archery experts, Mr Frank Bilson and Mr E. H. Nelson, are teaching their art to

American soldiers and sailors in the games' room of the American Red Cross Washington Club in London.

Few of these Americans ever handled a bow before they came to this country, but they will soon be qualified to shoot at the targets in the grounds of the British Toxophilite Society. "Toxophilite" means "bow-lover," and there are numerous archery clubs in Britain, though this excellent sport is not as popular as it was last century.

BEDTIME CORNER

HAPPY AWAKENING

ROSE dreamed she was a lily,
Lily dreamed she was a rose;
Robin dreamed he was a sparrow;
What the owl dreamed no one knows.

But they all woke up together
As happy as could be.
Said each: "You're lovely, neighbour,
But I'm very glad I'm me."

The Farmer and His Sons

AN old farmer who was about to die called his two sons, and said:

"My boys, all the fortune that I have to leave you is my farm and fields, which I give to you in equal shares; but you are on no account to let the ground pass out of your own occupation, for whatever treasure I have besides lies buried somewhere in the

ground within a foot of the surface."

The sons thought that their father was talking about some money he had buried; so after he was dead they set to work and carefully dug every inch of the ground.

They found no buried treasure, but the result of their digging was that the ground was so well turned over that it produced splendid crops, and the sons were well repaid for their trouble.

The way to become prosperous is to work hard.

PRAYER

WE thank Thee, O Lord, in our hearts for the happiness of this day, the kindness of friends, the peace of our home, and the love of our parents. Help us also to thank Thee in our lives by giving up ourselves to Thee and following in Thy ways today and through all the days to come. Amen

WINTER FROLICS



Two Thousand Years of British Sea-Power

RECENT naval victories have proved that British sailors and British shipbuilders have maintained in full degree their age-long prowess. Ever since the days of Caesar, when the high-topped vessels of the Britons for a time withstood the shallow galleys of the Romans, and of Alfred the Great, whose swift sea-rovers defeated the longships of the Vikings, the ship-building and seafaring genius of our race has been supreme.

But, though the intervening years were to see the great naval victories of Damme and Sluys, English sea-power was really born when Henry the Eighth launched the famous *Henri Grace à Dieu* (the Great Harry). Not only did England then boast the pride of the seas, but she claimed also the largest gun, a 66-pounder mounted on the Mary Rose.

When Henry's daughter, Elizabeth, died the great adventurers of Devon had raised our Navy's prestige to heights undreamt of even by her ambitious father.

The shattering defeat of the Spanish Armada was due to superior English seamanship and shipbuilding, the master stroke of the fire-ships, and the better fire-power and more skilful gunnery of the English, who, it is said, fired three shots to every one fired by the Spaniards. Guns were then becoming paramount in naval warfare, and, unwilling though Spain was to admit it, the rout of the Armada ended her hope of conquering England.

The Sovereign of the Seas

Charles the First, remembered for his tyrannous imposition of ship-money, has been seldom credited with his devotion in strengthening the guardian of our freedom. Indeed, the final success of Robert Blake in the Dutch Wars was due in no small measure to him. In 1637 Charles built the *Sovereign of the Seas*, indeed second to none.

The first half of the 18th century witnessed a marked improvement in the sailing and fighting qualities of British men-of-war. The copper-plating of ships' bottoms rendered them more seaworthy, and their fire-power was appreciably increased. Towards the end of the century the carronade was adopted and was an important factor in sea victories of the French wars, which culminated in Trafalgar.

But if the 18th century had seen advances the technical developments of the 19th were revolutionary. The Admiralty were persuaded in 1822 to build

a wooden paddle-steamer, the *Comet*. A quarter of a century later iron was to replace wood, and the paddle-wheel was to give way to the screw-propeller.

The 4½-inch armour of the first British ironclad, the 9000-ton *Warrior* of 1861, could not be penetrated by any shot of the day; but thenceforth the development of the gun was so rapid that although the largest shell muzzle-loader of 1860 could penetrate only 4 inches of iron, the largest breech-loader of 1885 would pierce 34 inches.

The First Turret Ships

The success of Ericsson's *Monitor* during the American Civil War was largely responsible for the introduction of the turret. One of the first turret-ships, designed by Captain Coles, the foremost British exponent of turrets, was the *Captain*. Top-heavy, this new type of warship foundered in 1870 off Cape Finisterre, but the new armament held the field, steam-operated turrets being fitted to the *Thunderer* two years later; later still hydraulic power was introduced.

In 1906 Admiral Jack Fisher launched his revolutionary *Dreadnought*. This 18,000-ton battleship, the first to have steam-turbines, was by far the most powerful warship afloat, and since then our ship-designers have produced fighting machines each in turn vastly superior to its predecessor.

Though Britain at first neglected the potentialities of the submarine, she pioneered the development of the destroyer, the aerial torpedo and the aircraft carrier; and though this war has brought many disasters at sea, the Navy has triumphed.

Progressive Gun-Power

In the development of the big guns we have made steady progress. The guns of the *Dreadnought* had a calibre of 12 inches, of the *Iron Duke* 13½, and of the *Queen Elizabeth* 15. Soon after the last Great War the two ships of the *Nelson* class were armed with nine 16-inch guns, three in a turret. The only British battleships completed since these, the *King George the Fifth* class, carry ten 14-inch guns, and are the first capital ships to mount four big guns in a turret. The *Duke of York*, which overwhelmed the *Scharnhorst*, belonged to this class. Four 45,000-ton ships of the *Lion* class, now being built, will have 16-inch guns, firing a 2400-pound shell over 35,000 yards.

The Navy has many secrets today, but it is no secret that radiolocation, wireless, and television are being brought to the peak of efficiency. In this war the Navy has successfully overcome the aeroplane, the magnetic mine, and the U-boat. The Admiralty is still the nerve centre of a far-flung Navy which, our first line of defence, is as far ahead of its rivals today as it ever was throughout its glorious past.

THE BIBLE & THE NATION

LORD LANG of Lambeth, former Archbishop of Canterbury, when receiving the honorary freedom of the Worshipful Company of Stationers and Newspaper Makers, spoke some wise words on what the Bible has meant, and still can mean to the British people.

The Master of the Company had reminded his listeners that the old Stationers' Hall had been the scene of much of the translation of the Authorised Version; and Lord Lang, in following, said there could be no better injunction to all the people, as this nation approached the greatest testing time in its history, than that they should seek to order their lives in accordance with the teaching of the Bible. Who could estimate its influence on the moulding of British characters and the upholding of our standard of values?

Lord Lang wished that more people knew their Bibles, and he could only hope that our people, entering on a strange and unknown future, would carry with them some of the greatest heritages that they had received from the past.

The Mystifying Cable

The C.N. has already told the story of a pair of duckbills, or platypuses, rearing their young for the first time in captivity. It seems to require a unique and august occasion to bring these rare creatures into the world's news.

The latest story of duckbills came over the cables at the time a section of the Royal Society was holding a special meeting in India, the first ever to take place out of England. There was an unprecedented occasion, and up popped the platypus in the news.

In 1884 the British Association for the Advancement of Science, also crossing the sea for the first time, held its annual conference at Montreal. The president of the natural history section, hearing from England that his son was ill, cabled for the latest bulletin. Later a cablegram was handed to him, and, supposing this to be the bulletin, he asked his wife to open it.

To her very great astonishment she read, not news of her ailing son, but these words, "The Duckbilled Platypus is oviparous." Unable to credit native stories of these warm-blooded furry animals laying eggs, the Royal Society had sent a scientific mission across the world to investigate, and this mystifying cable was confirmation of the story that duckbills do lay eggs.

FOR THE PACIFIC WAR

So long is the Pacific war expected to last that it is announced in Washington that over 70,000 landing craft are to be made for the American Navy by the end of 1947; and in that period 500 new warships of various types will be added.

The American Navy has largely increased its fleet of aircraft carriers; as many as 65 of these vessels were produced last year. The types include six of 27,000 tons, nine light carriers of 10,000 tons, and 50 escorting carriers.

The American Navy has now in being the greatest sea and air striking power known to history.

On Its Hilltop, Serene and Full of Years

HARROW CHURCH, with the shining spire familiar to countless millions, has just had a birthday—its 850th.

When the Bishop of London preaches in a parish church in the morning, and the Headmaster of Harrow preaches there in the afternoon, it is a great occasion; and the great occasion at Harrow Church the other Sunday was the 850th anniversary of its consecration by Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury.

Of the church that Anselm consecrated nothing remains, though the work of Norman builders can still be seen in the base of the tower. But though the mark of many centuries is on its walls antiquity alone is not responsible for the veneration and affection bestowed on Harrow Church. We cannot think of Harrow Church without summing up a picture of generations of Harrow schoolboys, Winston Churchill and other Prime Ministers among them, standing there and gazing reverently (or irreverently according to their mood) on the monuments of John Lyon. For was not this man, so brave a figure here in ruff and cloak, the godfather of them all? None

other than John Lyon was it who left lands to found their famous and historic school.

But others than schoolboys have an affection for Harrow. It is known far and wide, it is seen far and wide, it shares affections far and wide. Sharing the hill with the school and soaring over the treetops, the spire of St Mary's Church has been called the pinnacle perched on the precipice. It can be seen from Windsor Castle, and a story is told that Charles the Second, asked by a bishop which he understood by The Visible Church, pointed across the plain to this distant but familiar landmark.

Harrow Church, set steeply on its hill, wears serenely the mantle of its 850 years. Time has shown kindness towards it, and we can look on it still as did our forefathers, and as the poet Byron did—Byron, whose own daughter Allegra rests within its shade—when he wrote:

*Oh! as I trace again thy winding hill
Mine eyes admire, my heart
adores thee still.*

The Bank Clerk Likes Mining

A 20-YEAR-OLD bank clerk, who volunteered for duty in the Kentish coal-fields has paid a visit to his local Labour Exchange to say that he enjoys the work, and would not have missed it for anything.

We hear much of coal-mining families, whose sons refuse to follow their fathers and grandfathers down the mine. But while regretting this tendency we need not wonder at it, for this generation is too near to the bitter years of unemployment to seek willingly a mining career.

This bank clerk miner, however, may be a portent of better days to come. We take it all so much for granted, the ton of coal which stokes our grates and

keeps us warm. We seldom think of the men and boys sweating and toiling deep underground. Until the crisis of war-needs made us alert to the danger of low coal-production, the coal miners of Britain might have been a race apart for all we knew of their lives. This indifference to their hard and devoted labour was one of the great causes of bitterness among the miners.

That indifference has gone for ever. Suppose this volunteer clerk and thousands like him take a hand in the situation after the war? Suppose they say, We know the wrongs of the coal-fields; we are going to set them right? That way indeed may a great industry be revitalised.

Don't let Colds hang on

You can't be really well if you have a cough or cold that's sapping your vitality, spoiling your sleep, ruining your digestion. Never let a cold hang on.

The best way to get rid of a cold properly is an old-fashioned recipe which has become so popular lately that most chemists now keep it made up ready for use. It's the "Parmint" recipe.

The very first dose of this *Parmint Syrup* will start to bring relief. Soon you'll find it going altogether. Then you'll realise just how poorly you've been.

By the way, this *Parmint Syrup* is grand for kiddies. It's absolutely safe and they really like the taste of it.

Beware. Get a bottle of *Parmint Syrup* from your chemist today and keep it handy, 1/5 the bottle including tax.

NOTE.—If you want to make it up yourself, ask for a 1 oz. bottle of the *Parmint Concentrated Essences* (price 3/11). It is even more economical that way.



Mother! Child's Best Laxative is 'California Syrup of Figs'

Children love the pleasant taste of 'California Syrup of Figs,' and gladly take it even when bilious, feverish, sick or constipated. This laxative regulates the tender little bowels easily and safely. It sweetens the stomach and moves the bowels without cramping or over-acting.

Millions of mothers depend upon this gentle, harmless laxative.

Tell your chemist you want 'California Syrup of Figs,' which has full directions for babies and children of all ages.

Obtainable everywhere at 1/4 and 2/6.

ON THE HEAD

"Why do people say, As dead as a door-nail?" asked inquisitive Bobby. "Why is a door-nail any deader than a door?"

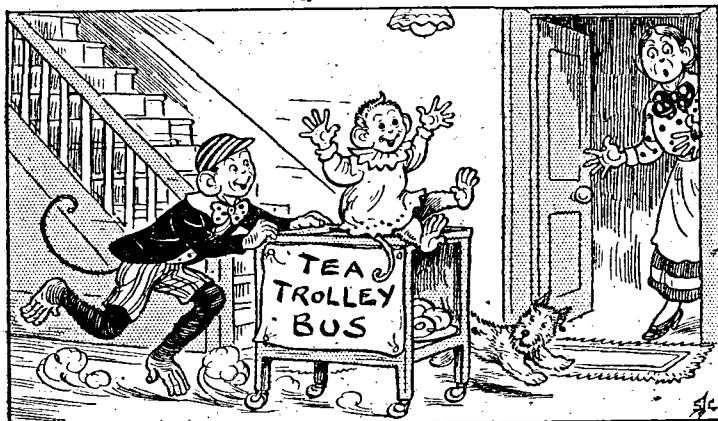
"Because it has been hit on the head, I suppose," replied Father, absent-mindedly.

REAPING

THE good we did yesterday is the joy of today.

An Indian proverb

Jacko's Bus Service



WHENEVER Jacko saw the tea trolley in use he felt that it was really intended for quite another purpose. So one afternoon he had a great idea. "Come along, Baby," he called. "I'll take you for a ride. You shall be the first passenger on the Tea Trolley Bus Service." All went well for a while, but then the terrific din awoke Mrs Jacko from her afternoon nap. "Whatever are you doing?" she gasped. "And, Jacko, where is your cap?" That was the first, and the last, day of the new bus service!

A JESTER'S JINGLE

A FLY got caught once, in a web,
And soon the spider spied her.
A donkey pricked her ears and brayed,
Just to deride her rider.
Quite oft a lady, when she's vexed,
Will make a feint in fainting,
She uses it but to deceive,
As she does paint in painting.
To sober keep I signed the pledge,
My sole design in signing.

Some men throw all their cash away,
But I spend mine in mining.
I can't play billiards; when I miss I don't accuse a cue, sir.
If you can play a better game I'll take a view of you, sir.

Some rhymes may more mellifluous sound,
But you can't meet a metre
To puzzle you much more than this,
Though quite as sweet or sweeter.

River Which Changes Its Bed

ONE of the strangest rivers in the world is the Hwang-ho, the great Yellow River of Northern China.

Besides being too fast for navigation it is a danger to the people, for it has the habit of changing its bed, and is said to have shifted its course nine times in 2500 years. It has been nicknamed China's Sorrow.

The Children's Hour

Here are details of the BBC broadcasts for Wednesday, January 26, to Tuesday, February 1.

WEDNESDAY, 5.20 Stuff and Nonsense—Funfare on the Air, with Doris Gambell, Violet Carson, Wilfred Pickles, Muriel Levy, and Nan, and Barrie Cameron as guest artist. 5.55 Prayers.

THURSDAY, 5.20 Irish Rhythm Orchestra; followed by a story. 5.50 Letter from America.

FRIDAY, 5.20 The Yellow Paint Mark, a play by J. D. Strange.

SATURDAY, 5.20 The Swish of the Curtain, by John Keir Ross, based on the book by Pamela Brown—Part 3, The Trophy.

SUNDAY, 5.20 The Three White Birds, a play by Kathleen Fidler,

What Size is Your Hat?

IF you do not remember the size of your hat when you go to buy a new one here is a simple method of finding it.

Measure the length of the hat you are wearing from back to front inside; then measure the width inside, and add the two together. The length, we will say, is seven inches, and the width is five and three-quarters, which make twelve and three-quarter inches.

Now divide by two, and you have six and three-eighths, which is the size of hat required.

BOOK RHYMES

SMALL is the wren,
Black is the rook;
Great is the sinner
Who steals this book.

This book is mine
By right divine;
And if it go astray
I'll call you kind
My desk to find
And put it safe away.

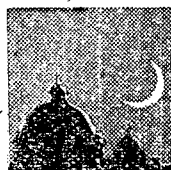
The Clever Albatross

THE albatross is one of the most wonderful creatures in Nature. These sea birds rest upon their way over the water, letting themselves be blown along by the wind.

They never make a steering movement, but cleverly use the different air currents, and when wanting to take a sharp turn throw themselves over on one side and dip one wing in the water to obtain more air resistance.

Other Worlds

IN the evening Mars, Saturn, and Uranus are in the south, and Jupiter is in the south-east. In the morning Venus and Mercury are in the south-east. The picture shows the Moon as it may be seen at 6.30 p.m. on Thursday, January 27.



Nothing Harder

"WHAT is the hardest part of skating when you're learning?" asked the new pupil.

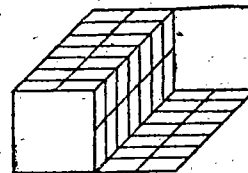
"The ice," was the unsympathetic instructor's reply.

Tongue Twister

SAY rapidly three times in succession: If 6 saws cut 6 cigars, 606 saws cut 606 cigars.

An Optical Illusion

LOOK carefully at this figure for a moment and then say whether you see a solid block with the top toward you on the right, and a kind of wing and



open space on the left, or whether you see the solid on the left and the hollow space to the right. Or perhaps you may seem to see two solids set at an angle to one another. If you watch the figure it will probably appear to change from one form to another.

NATURE NEWS

SPRING seems very near when we see the tortoise-shell butterfly on the wing and the starlings begin to build their nests, although these birds do not really begin to set up house-keeping until about May. The drooping catkins of the hazel are now showing, and the water spider explores the banks of streams in search of food.

GENUINE

"WAITRESS, what is this stuff?" "Cottage pie, sir."

"Ah! I thought so. I can taste plaster and wallpaper."

Getting Out a Splinter

HERE is a good way of getting a splinter from the hand. Press the affected part of the hand over the mouth of a small bottle which has been recently filled with very hot water. Let the splinter get well steamed, and then without lifting the hand put the bottle into a basin of cold water.

As the water in the bottle cools the air inside contracts and the suction draws the splinter outwards. It will then be quite easy to remove it with the fingers. It is most important to keep the hand well pressed on the bottle all the time, as no air from the outside must be allowed to enter.

From Giant to Midget

THE largest frog known is the giant Bull Frog of Africa. It weighs ten pounds. The smallest species of frog is found in Cuba. It is so tiny that its weight is hardly equal to that of three grains of wheat. It would take twenty thousand Cuban frogs to equal the weight of one bull frog.

LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS

BEGIN	CAP
LION	HOSE
ODO	RINSE
WEDDING	R
R	RAG
E	GENERAL
SPRAT	AXE
PRIM	BRIG
YON	DEEMS

Hidden Fish

Roach, shad, cod, herring, turbot, barbel.

Jumbled Battles

Britain, Tunisia, El Alamein, River Plate, Stalingrad.

His teeth need YOUR care-

Mother, you can do something for your child for which he will thank you throughout his life. By taking proper care now you can ensure his having sound teeth when he grows up. Dentists advise the use of the one toothpaste containing 'Milk of Magnesia', which corrects acid-mouth—so often the cause of dental decay.

The toothpaste to ask for is Phillips' Dental Magnesia. Train your children to use it night and morning. They love its pleasant mild flavour.

1/1d. and 1/10½d.



* 'Milk of Magnesia' is the trade mark of Phillips' preparation of magnesia.



RESULTS OF NOVEMBER BSA MISSING WORD COMPETITION

For the best and most art sets of answers, of equal merit, the judges have awarded prizes to the following entrants:— Alison Scott, Newcastle-upon-Tyne; Hector Roy, Dumfries; Kenneth Bond, Ramsey; Hunts; S. Taylor, Harleston, Norfolk; Lily Nicholl, Belfast; D. Brooks, Heston; D. Salway, Rhonda; each receiving an equal share of the £10 in prizes.